

LXXXI.—*Four new African Carnivores.*

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Helogale vetula, sp. n.

A species nearly without the buffy and rufous tones characteristic of the other central and northern species.

General colour above finely grizzled grey, very much as in *H. atkinsoni*, but with still less suffusion of buffy. Head minutely speckled "smoke-grey"; no rufous or buffy on the sides of the face. Under surface scarcely lighter than back, the belly brownish grey, the throat and inguinal region drabby, washed inconspicuously with dull buffy. Sides of neck behind ears rather stronger buffy. Limbs like body to the metapodials, the latter and the digits dull pinkish buff. Tail grizzled, its tip and median line below slightly buffy.

Teeth of medium size.

Dimensions of the type (measured in flesh):—

Head and body 215 mm.; tail (perhaps shortened in confinement) 130; hind foot 44; ear 25.

Skull: condylo-basal length 50·5; zygomatic breadth 32; interorbital breadth 10·4; breadth of brain-case 23·5; palatal length 24; breadth between outer corners of p^4 19; p^4 , length on outer edge 3·8, greatest diameter 5·1; breadth of m^1 4·7.

Hab. Lamu, coast of British East Africa.

Type. Adult male. B.M. no. 11.10.26. 1. Presented alive to the Zoological Society by the Rev. W. D. Braginton, and given at death to the National Museum.

This species is at once distinguished from the other East African forms of *Helogale* by the almost complete suppression of the buffy, rufous, or ochraceous tones generally present, especially on the muzzle, cheeks, and under surface. Even the comparatively greyish Somali species, *H. atkinsoni*, is tawny or ochraceous on the throat and inguinal region, though, like *H. vetula*, it has a greyish head.

From *H. hirtula* the present species is separated by its buffy instead of blackish toes.

Helogale percivali, sp. n.

A dark grey species with blackish limbs.

Fur close, finely speckled, not loose and shaggy as in

H. hirtula, though the isolated longer hairs in the fur are unusually numerous. General colour above dark finely speckled greyish brown of a tone unlike that of any other species—a sort of greyish bistre; the underfur blackish for its basal half, dull ochraceous buff terminally. Head between burnt umber and vandyke-brown; chin and interramia similar. Belly darker brown; inguinal region paler. Forearms from elbows blackish brown, darkening on digits to black; fore claws rather larger than usual. Feet dark grizzled brown, the digits blackish brown. Tail dark speckled brown, not becoming more rufous terminally above, although there is an inconspicuous rufous line below, more obvious basally.

Dimensions of the type (measured in flesh):—

Head and body 225 mm.; tail 175; hind foot 47; ear 21.

Skull: condylo-basal length 505; zygomatic breadth 30; interorbital breadth 10; breadth of brain-case 22.5; front of canine to back of m^2 17.4; p^1 , length on outer edge 4.1, greatest diameter 6; m^1 , breadth 4.8; m^2 , breadth 4.

Hab. Orr Valley, near Mt. Nyiro, N. British E. Africa, 4500'.

Type. Adult male. Original number 427. Collected 31st March, 1911, by Mr. A. Blayney Percival.

This striking species is distinguishable by the combination of blackish feet with rufous head, the other rufous- or buffy-headed forms all having similarly rufous feet.

Helogale hirtula lutescens, subsp. n.

Like the typical *hirtula* of the highlands of Central Somali, but with the posterior back suffused with dull buffy. Throat and belly with the dull rufescent colour replaced by grey on the former and brownish on the latter part. In other respects as in *hirtula*, including the blackish digits.

P^1 of the type, greatest diameter 6.2; m^1 5.6.

External measurements of the Webi specimen:—

Head and body 243 mm.; tail 185; hind foot 45; ear 15.

Hab. (of type). Lake Rudolf, on the plains near the N. end of the Lake. Another specimen from Italian Somaliland.

Type. Young male. B.M. no. 6. 11. 1. 19. Original number 126. Collected 7th August, 1905, by Ph. C. Zaphiro. Presented by W. N. McMillan, Esq.

The Museum owes to Dr. R. E. Drake-Brockman an adult example of this buffy-backed form of *H. hirtula*, obtained

by him at Afgo, Webi River, Italian Somaliland. But unfortunately its skull has been lost, and I therefore take as type Mr. Zaphiro's specimen from Lake Rudolf. Allowing for the difference of age, the two specimens appear to agree closely with each other, and equally to differ from the grey-backed *H. hirtula*.

Lutra maculicollis nilotica, subsp. n.

Larger than in the other subspecies, the throat white-spotted.

Size, as gauged by skull, larger than in true *maculicollis* and in *L. m. matschiei*. General colour as usual. Lips white-edged, throat profusely spotted with white, a few white spots also in the inguinal region.

Skull, both of male and female, decidedly larger than in the corresponding sexes of *maculicollis* and *matschiei*, the difference most pronounced in the male. Brain-case high and vaulted. Teeth comparatively large.

Skull-measurements of adult male and female specimens:—

Condyllo-basal length 113·5 mm., 105; basal length 103·5, 96·8; zygomatic breadth 69, 63; interorbital breadth 20·5, 18·5; mastoid breadth 59, 54; height of brain-case from between bullæ 41, 40·5; front of canine to back of m^1 34·5, 32·2; p^4 , length on outer edge 12·4, 11·3; greatest diameter of m^1 12·8, 10·6.

Hab. Malek, just south of Bor, Upper Nile.

Type. Adult male. Original number 2. Two skulls and three skins, obtained from the Dinkas by the Rev. Archibald Shaw, of the Church Missionary Society, by whom they were sent to Mr. A. L. Butler, of Khartoum.

While there is no question that this otter may be readily distinguished from the true *L. maculicollis* of South and Central Africa and *L. m. matschiei* of the Congo and Gulf of Guinea by its greater size, there is some doubt about the Abyssinian otter described by O. Neumann as *L. concolor**. But Prof. Neumann expressly states that of many skins of *L. concolor* examined, none had any light throat-markings (these being present in all three of Mr. Butler's skins) and that the animal inhabited the Hawash river-basin on the eastern side of the watershed, and not the Nilotic river-system at all.

* SB. Ges. nat. Fr. Berl. 1902, p. 55.